THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee:	**Climate Change Committee**
Date:	**16 March 2023**
Report Title:	**Fleet Decarbonisation – E-cargo Bike Pilot Scheme**
Report By:	**Interim Chief Executive**

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This paper provides information on an E-cargo Bike Pilot Scheme for Council business travel, outlines progress undertaken to date and next steps.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

i) Note the principles of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and how E-cargo bikes can offer low emission business travel and reduce fleet emissions.

ii) Note the progress to date on development of this scheme.

iii) Note the next steps for establishing the 12-month Pilot Scheme.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource:

Personnel: The development of the project will be undertaken the Climate Change and Energy Team and be supported by the Fleet Service.

Financial: The e-cargo pilot scheme is funded by Sustrans. This includes supply of bikes and equipment, training, maintenance, and storage (if required). Insurance is to be covered by the Council.

3.2 Legal and Risk: Legal: There are no legal implications arising from this report.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): This pilot offers the Council an opportunity to model low-emission transport alternatives. More environmentally friendly fleet will result in better air quality for our communities. This approach supports our wider Net Zero agenda, and promotes low-carbon, active travel within our communities and the wider region.

3.4   Climate Change / Carbon Clever: The project supports the Scottish Government's targets for Net Zero and The Highland Council's Net Zero agenda.

3.5   Gaelic: None arising from this report.

4.   Background

4.1   The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009[1] and the subsequent Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019[2] ("the Act') introduced binding targets and legislation to reduce Scotland's emissions by 75% by 2030, and to end Scotland's contribution to climate change no later than 2045.

4.2   The Highland Council declared a climate and ecological emergency on 9 May 2019[3] in recognition of the serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change. In so doing, Members recommitted to achieving a carbon neutral Highland by 2025, and in 2022 established the Climate Change Committee to oversee and expedite the shift to a Net Zero future. The transport sector is currently the greatest contributor to harmful climate emissions in Scotland. The Scottish Government has made the commitment to work with public bodies to[4]:

- Reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030.

- phase out the need for all petrol and diesel cars and light commercial vehicles from the public sector fleet by 2025.

- phase out the need for all new petrol and diesel vehicles in Scotland's public sector fleet by 2030.

4.3   To facilitate the move towards these targets, the Council established a fleet decarbonisation project. This is a joint project between the Fleet Team and the Climate Change and Energy Team.

4.4   The Council has already made significant progress on the fleet decarbonisation, with changes in the way we work through various Council policies such as New Ways of Working (NWOW), the use of the Council Car Club, and introduction of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) within the Light Fleet.

5.   E-Cargo Pilot Scheme

5.1   The project aims to reduce fleet emissions by offsetting fleet vehicle travel with low-emission E-cargo bike travel. This project is in line with the principles of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy:

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[1] Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/12/contents
[2] Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/15/contents/enacted
3 https://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4119/highland_council/attachment/75435
[4]   https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2020/12/securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero-update-climate-change-plan-20182032/documents/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero/govscot%3Adocument/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero.pdf
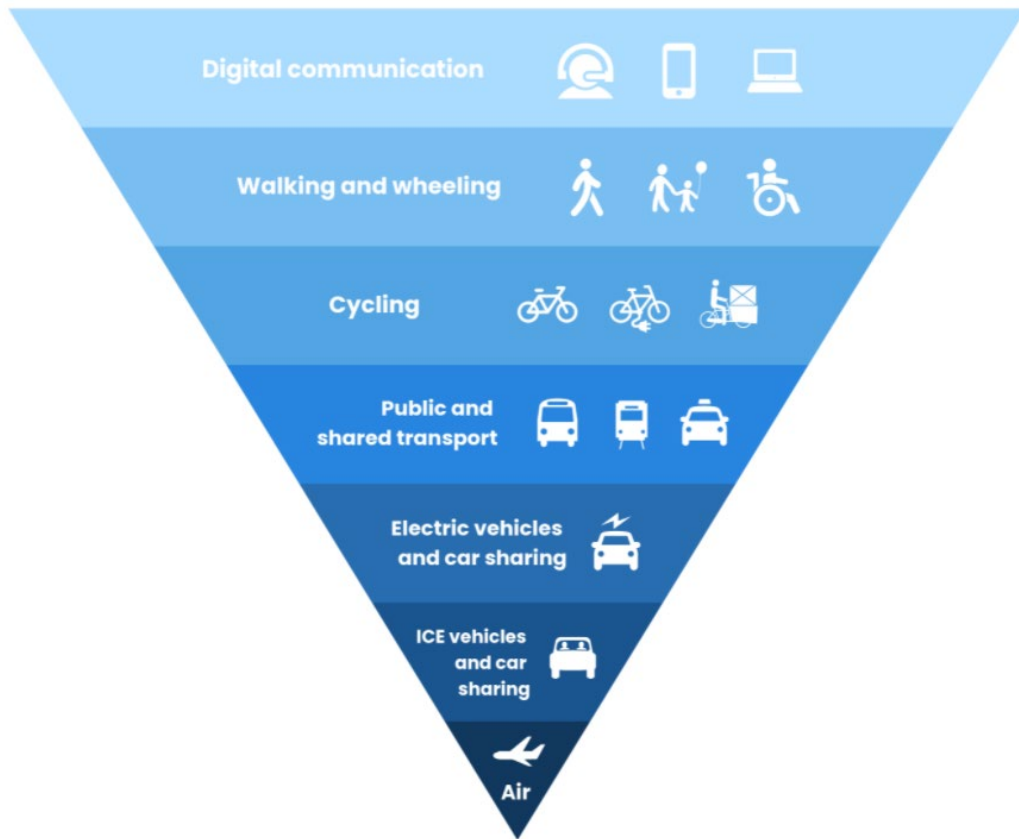
Figure 1: Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

5.2   Key project objectives include:

- Offset fleet vehicles with low emission alternative.
- Reduce car miles travelled and offer fuel cost savings.
- Provide health and wellbeing benefits for Council employees.

5.3   The project is funded by Sustrans and includes the following items:

- 12-month pilot of three E-cargo bikes for business use.
- Two E-cargo trial sessions and user trainings.
- Bike equipment (e.g., helmets, bike lock)
- Secure storage shed (if required)
- On-going support and maintenance as required.

5.4   The Council is responsible for:

- Security of the E-cargo bike.
- Basic maintenance of the E-cargo bike (e.g., checking brakes and tyres as shown in the training session) and report any faults to Sustrans.
- E-cargo bike public liability insurance.
- Ensuring that all users to the E-cargo bike have signed the user agreement and have undertaken the E-cargo bike training.

5.5   Three Council teams have volunteered to take part in the scheme:

- Inverness Amenities Team: Bike to be used for litter picking and maintenance at Bught Park area.

- Inverness Roads Team: Bike to be used for local road inspections.

- Fort William Child Health Team: Bike to be used for local health visits.

6.0   Next steps

6.1   To progress the project the following next steps are identified**:**

- **Insurance:** Arrange for public liability insurance for all users.

- **Cycling policy:** Liaise with HR to ensure cycling is covered with the relevant Council policy. Develop additional policy if required.

- **Training and Trial days:** Two training days have been provisionally arranged for Fort William (25/04/2023) and Inverness (26/04/2023).
  - 10-12pm: come and try session (open to employees all)
  - 1-4pm: training session for up to 4 members of staff.

- **Communications:** provide information within the relevant service teams on the come and try sessions.

- **On-going project support**: Provide support to the E-cargo users to ensure successful project and collect feedback on the project.

Designation: Interim Chief Executive

Date: 6 March 2023

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